

NSC BRIEFING NOTE

5 February 1963

SOVIET FORCES IN CUBA

Personnel

- I. From a few hundred technicians in the summer of 1962, the Soviet military presence in Cuba has grown to include regular troops manning the tanks and other weapons of mobile army groups, radar and missile specialists in charge of an extensive air defense system, and a large number of communications, air force, naval, and other personnel.
  - A. Although some 5,000 to 6,000 troops associated with the offensive missile systems have left, we believe 17,000 Soviet military personnel remain.
    1. These troops operate equipment which the Cubans are not yet able to operate or which the Soviets do not intend to give to Cuba.
    2. They are a tangible expression of Soviet concern for the preservation of a Communist state in Cuba.
      - a. They help defend Castro regime against internal attack.
      - b. They may also serve as brake on Castro adventurism.

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3. There are no indications of major Soviet troop withdrawals from Cuba, either planned or in train.
4. DETAILS: Major components and estimated strengths are:
  - a. Air and air defense: 7,500
    - SAM system--3,500
    - AAA and radars--3,100
    - MIG fighters--900
  - b. Army ground forces: 7,500
    - Armored groups--5,000
    - Headquarters, engineers, training--2,500
  - c. Navy: 2,000
    - Cruise-missile units--1,000
    - KOMAR guided-missile boats--200
    - Headquarters, communications, security--800

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Air Defense System

II. To defend their MRBMs and IRBMs, the Soviets planned and largely achieved before the missile withdrawals an integrated air defense system employing both surface-to-air (SAM) missiles and jet fighters, backed by an extensive radar and communications net.

A. Efforts to improve the SAM system continue.

1. Since the withdrawal of the MRBM and IRBM units, three SAM sites have been involved in major relocations. In each case, the SAM site was moved away from the coast and closer to an important military objective.
2. On 30 January, a new SAM site under construction was photographed southeast of Havana near a military airfield. This may indicate that an existing SAM site near the coast in the same general area will shortly be moved.
3. DETAILS:
  - a. 24 operational SAM sites, each with 6 launchers and approximately 20 missiles. Total SAM missiles--approximately 500.
  - b. SA-2 missile (Guideline) has an estimated range of 25-30 n.m. with a 500-lb. HE warhead. The SA-2 is considered

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effective against aircraft operating between 3,000 and 80,000 feet, with limited effectiveness down to 2,500 feet and up to 100,000 feet.

- c. The SAM sites appear to be manned entirely by Soviet personnel. Although some training of Cubans in operation of SAM equipment may be planned, there are no indications that this has begun.

B. To supplement surface-to-air missiles, the Soviets have brought in 104 MIG fighters.

- 1. Of these, 42 are MIG-21 (Fishbed) aircraft, manned entirely by Soviet personnel.

- a. The MIG-21 is a highspeed (Mach 2) aircraft which can be used both for ground support and air defense. Its armaments includes infrared homing air-to-air missiles. It has a combat radius of 350 n.m.

- 2. There are 50 MIG 15/17's and 12 MIG-19's.

Most of these are being manned by Cuban pilots.

C. Communications is a vital part of modern military technology. The Soviets have invested heavily in giving their forces in Cuba the facilities necessary for effective operation in Cuba, in addition to the necessary links to the USSR.

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1. The Soviets run their own communications with little or no help from the Cubans or Cuban facilities.
2. Cubans appear to work conjointly with Soviets in some reporting aspects of the air

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3. DETAILS:

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Cruise Missiles

III. Although the Soviets brought in approximately 150 coastal defense missiles during the build-up, they have thus far established only 4 operational sites.

A. The large number of cruise missiles which remain in crates suggests that the Cuban crisis interrupted a Soviet program to deploy several more sites.

B. DETAILS:

1. There are 4 operational units, with 8-10 missiles each, at Sigüanea, Santa Cruz del Norte, Banes, and Campo Florida (a standby and training site). Total missiles: 32-40.
2. Cruise missiles are believed to be in crates observed at:

Guerra (just west of Mariel) -- 46

Mayari Arriba (in eastern Cuba) -- 48

Santiago de Cuba (west of Guantanamo) -- 21

a. This makes a total of 115 cruise missiles still in crates, enough to establish about 15 more sites.

3. The coastal defense missile observed in Cuba is a surface-launched version of the AS-1 air-to-surface, anti-shipping missile. In this version, it has an estimated range of 30 to 40 nautical miles, with a 2,200-pound conventional warhead.

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Soviet Armored Groups

IV. In late August and early September, the Soviets established mobile armored groups at camps in the general vicinity of the offensive missile sites. These units were probably meant to provide local defense for these sites in event of US invasion or guerrilla sabotage attempts.

A. Each encampment--at Remedios, Santiago de las Vegas, Artemisa, and Holguin--contains about 1,500 officers and men and their organic equipment.

1. The four groups have a total of 40 heavy tanks, 340 medium tanks, and 15 amphibious tanks, as well as assault guns, mortars, and infantry rocket launchers.
2. There are about 24-32 FROG tactical rockets, an anti-personnel weapon with a range of about 50,000 yards.
3. The Soviet mobile armored groups are also equipped with <sup>32</sup>28 SNAPPER wire-guided anti-tank rockets.

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Missile Patrol Boats

V. To complement the coastal defense capabilities of the cruise missiles, the Soviets brought in 12 KOMAR guided-missile patrol boats.

A. These units are being operated by mixed Soviet and Cuban crews.

B. DETAILS:

1. The boat is a Soviet P-6 motor torpedo boat hull modified to carry two missile launchers. It has a top speed of 43 knots with maximum range of 650 n.m. at 20 knots.
2. The missile has a range of 10-15 nautical miles (limited by radar line-of-sight) and carries a conventional warhead of about 2,000 pounds.
3. All 12 KOMAR's are now in Mariel-Havana area, although 4 have operated out of Banes at times in the past.

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